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**The syncollisional granitoid magmatism and crust growth during the West Qinling
Orogeny, China: Insights from the Jiaochangba pluton**

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Abstract

The West Qinling Orogenic Belt (WQOB) is a major portion of the Qinling-Dabie-Sulu Orogen and holds essential information for understanding the protracted evolution of the northeastern branch of the Paleo-Tethys in East Asia. In this study, we report our petrological, geochemical and geochronological study on the five Triassic granitoid plutons of West Qinling with emphasis on the poorly studied Jiaochangba pluton with zircon U-Pb ages of 217.5 ± 1.6 Ma and 215.2 ± 1.2 Ma. The new data and the existing data on the other four plutons support the view that the West Qinling granitoids represent a magmatic response to the continental collision of the Yangtze Block (YB) with the North China Craton (NCC) in the Triassic. Like the other four plutons, the Jiaochangba pluton show strong light rare earth element (REE) enrichment and weak heavy REE depletion ($[La/Sm]_N \approx 7.14 \pm 1.89$; $[Sm/Yb]_N \approx 4.63 \pm 1.85$) with varying negative Eu anomalies ($Eu/Eu^* \approx 0.65 \pm 0.20$). In the N-MORB normalized diagram, all the samples show relative enrichment in Rb, Pb, U and K with negative Nb, Ta, P and Ti anomalies, resembling those of the model continental crust. The Jiaochangba pluton has relatively lower $(^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr)_i$ (0.7062 to 0.7081), higher $\epsilon_{Nd}(t)$ (-6.91 to -2.09) and $\epsilon_{Hf}(t)$ (-5.57 to -0.14) than mature continental crust, which are consistent with their source being dominated by lower crust with significant mantle contributions. Mantle-derived melt, which formed from partial melting of mantle wedge peridotite facilitated by dehydration of the subducted/subducting Mianlue ocean crust, provide the required heat for the crustal melting while also contributing to the compositions of these granitoids. Evolution of such parental magmas in open system crustal magma chambers with continued evolution/replenishment and crustal contamination and assimilation give rise to

the observed petrological and geochemical characteristics of these granitoids.

Keywords: continental collision; Jiaochangba granitoids; lower crust melting; petrogenesis; West Qinling

1. Introduction

It has been accepted that the bulk continental crust (BCC) has grown progressively through episodic magmatism over Earth's history (Condie, 2000). Granites are the most abundant igneous rocks in the Earth's upper continental crust. Hence, granitic magmatism has been widely used to study continental crust growth. Traditionally, continental crust is considered to be formed through subduction-zone magmatism because of the arc-like chemical signature of the BCC (e.g., enrichment of large ion lithophile elements (LILEs), depletion in high field strength elements (HFSEs)), which is termed "island arc model" (Taylor, 1967). However, the "island arc model" has more difficulties than certainties, including, e.g., (1) Bulk arc crust is too mafic for the andesitic bulk continental crust; (2) Arc settings have no net crustal addition (see Niu and O'Hara, 2009; Niu et al., 2013). Because of this and on the basis of their detailed studies of the Linzizong syncollisional volcanic sequence in southern Tibet (Niu et al., 2007; Mo et al., 2008), Niu and co-workers hypothesize that continental collision zones are primary sites of net continental crustal growth (Niu et al., 2013). In this hypothesis, during continental collision, the remaining subducted ocean crust undergoes partial melting under amphibolite facies conditions, which produces and preserves granitoid magmas, contributing to net growth of continental crust. Because globally, active seafloor subduction is continuous, but continental collision is

episodic, this hypothesis also satisfies the episodic growth of the continental crust and overcomes the difficulties of “island arc model”. This hypothesis has been tested with success along several orogenic belts on the greater Tibetan Plateau (Mo et al., 2007; Mo et al., 2008; Niu and O'Hara, 2009; Niu et al., 2013; Huang et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2016; Shao et al., 2017).

In this paper, we further test this hypothesis on syncollisional granitoids in the West Qingling Orogenic Belt (WQOB) by (1) presenting new LA-ICP-MS zircon U-Pb ages, whole-rock major and trace element data and Sr-Nd-Hf isotopic compositions for the syncollisional Jiaochangba (JCB) pluton, and (2) discussing the petrogenesis of the JCB granitoid pluton together with the four other coexisting granitoid plutons in space and time (i.e., Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing, Baijiazhuang and JCB,).

The WQOB is the western segment of the Qinling orogenic belt in central China, which is one of the largest in Asia (Mattauer et al., 1985), linking Kunlun and Qilian orogens to the west and Dabie-Sulu orogen to the east (Lai et al., 1996; Meng and Zhang, 2000; Ratschbacher et al., 2003). The Qinling orogen is a multistage orogen with two sutures. The northern suture lies along the Shangdan tectonic zone, whereas the southern suture is marked by the Mianue ophiolite complex. The Qinling orogen developed through a series of complex seafloor subduction and terrane collision events (Zhang et al., 2001; Ratschbacher et al., 2003;

Wang et al., 2009; Wu and Zheng, 2012; Dong et al., 2015), ultimately completed as a result of the continental collision of the Yangtze Block (YB) with the North China Craton (NCC) along the Mianlue suture zone in the Triassic (see Figure 1; Dong et al., 2011 and references therein). Abundant granitoids were produced in West Qinling this time and have received much attention in recent decades with mounting geochronological and geochemical data with the aim of better understanding magma sources and processes in the context of studying the Qinling orogenesis. However, the petrogenesis of these granitoids remains controversial, e.g., magma mixing of mantle-derived basaltic magmas and crust-derived felsic magmas or lower crust melting (e.g., Sun et al., 2002; Qin et al., 2009, 2010; Jiang et al., 2010; Liu et al., 2011a, b; Dong et al., 2011, 2012; Yang et al., 2011, 2012; Zhu et al., 2013; Xiao et al., 2014; Liang et al., 2015; Li et al., 2017).

2. Geological setting and sampling

The Qinling orogen has been divided into East and West Qinling on the basis of their geology (Zhang et al., 2001, 2005, 2007; Feng et al., 2002; Figure 1b). The west Qinling orogenic belt is adjacent to the Qilian orogenic belt (Figure 1a) and is bounded by the Wushan-Tianshui fault to the north and the Mianlue suture to the south (Figure 1b). The granitoids are mainly of Indosinian age distributed along the north of the Mianlue suture (Zhu et al., 2011). In the WQOB, the Phanerozoic stratigraphy is dominated by the Devonian-Cretaceous sedimentary sequences with minor Cambrian-Silurian sedimentary series (Feng et al., 2002). The JCB pluton located in the center of the WQOB is circular in shape and covers ~120 km² in area, and intruded the Permian strata (Figure 1c). We collected samples from the JCB pluton (104°37'31.0"-104°38'29.0"E, 34°26'21.3"-34°30'35.4"N) and its

surrounding plutons (i.e., Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and Baijiazhuang; [Figure 1c](#)). The Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and Baijiazhuang plutons nearly all comprise diorites, quartz diorites, granodiorites and monzogranites with varying amount of mafic magmatic enclaves (MMEs) ([Duan et al., 2016](#); [Kong et al., 2017](#); [Yang et al., 2017](#)). The lithology, geochemistry, geochronology and general characteristics of the five granitoid plutons including JCB pluton are given in [Table 1](#).

The granitoid samples from the JCB pluton are intermediate- to coarse-grained biotite granites with gray to pink colors and granitic texture ([Figure 2a](#)). Their mineralogy includes K-feldspar (~ 20%), plagioclase (~ 35%), quartz (~ 30%) and minor hornblende and biotite (~ 5%) with accessory apatite, zircon and Fe-Ti oxides ([Figure 2c](#)). Fine-grained mafic magmatic enclaves (MMEs) are dispersed in the JCB pluton ([Figure 2b](#)). The MMEs are of fine-grained granitic texture dominated by hornblende + biotite (~ 40% in total), plagioclase (~ 40%) and quartz (~ 15%) with accessory minerals similar to those in their granitoid host ([Figure 2d](#)). [Figure 2d](#) shows the sharp contact of MMEs with their host granodiorite, where MMEs are finer-grained than the host and have no chilled margins and textures of crystal resorption and reactive overgrowth. Mafic minerals and plagioclase are generally euhedral to subhedral, indicating that they may represent early-formed phases (see [Reid and Hamilton, 1987](#)); some plagioclase crystals showing clear zoning with K-feldspar and quartz being interstitial..

3. Analytical methods

Ten freshest and representative samples from the JCB pluton were analyzed for whole-

rock major and trace elements, and Sr-Nd-Hf isotope compositions. Two of the samples were selected for zircon U-Pb dating. Weathered surfaces and pen saw marks were removed and thoroughly cleaned, then ultrasonically cleaned with Milli-Q water and dried before powdered using an agate mill into ~ 200-mesh in a clean environment.

3.1 LA-ICP-MS zircon U-Pb dating

Zircons were extracted using combined techniques of heavy liquid and magnetic separation. The zircon internal structure was examined using cathodoluminescence (CL) imaging on an EMPA-JXA-8100 scanning electron microscope at China University of Geosciences, Wuhan (CUGW). Zircon U-Pb dating on samples JCB12-07 and JCB12-12 was carried out at the Geological Lab Center, China University of Geosciences, Beijing (CUGB) using an Agilent 7500a inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) with a New Wave UPP-193 laser ablation system. During the analysis, laser spot size was set to ~ 36 μm for most analyses and to 25 μm for some rims, laser energy density at 8.5 J/cm² and repetition rate at 10 Hz. The procedure of laser sampling is 5-s pre-ablation, 20-s sample-chamber flushing and 40-s sample ablation. The ablated material is carried into the ICP-MS by the high-purity Helium gas stream with flux of 0.8 L/min. The whole laser path was fluxed with N₂ (15 L/min) and Ar (1.15 L/min) in order to increase energy stability. Calibrations were done using NIST 610 glass as an external standard and Si as an internal standard. U-Pb isotope fractionation effects were corrected for using zircon 91500 ([Wiedenbeck et al., 1995](#)) as an external standard. The age data processed using the GLITTER4.41 program are given in [Table 2](#) with analytical details given in [Song et al. \(2010a\)](#). The concordia diagrams and weighted mean age calculation were performed using ISOPLOT 4.15 ([Ludwig, 2012](#); [Figure](#)

3).

3.2 Mineral compositions

Mineral chemistry was determined using a JEOL EPMA8230 microprobe at Langfang, China. The analytical procedure follows the quantitative analysis of silicate minerals by electron probe microanalysis of the State Standard of the People's Republic of China (GB/T 15617–2002).

3.3 Major and trace elements

Whole-rock major and trace elements were analyzed using Prodigy Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometer (ICP-OES) and Agilent 7500a ICP-MS at CUGB, respectively. Analyses of United States Geological Survey (USGS) rock standards (AGV-2) and Chinese national rock standard (GSR-1 and GSR-3) give precisions (1σ) better than 1% for most major elements, except for TiO_2 ($\sim 1.5\%$) and P_2O_5 ($\sim 2\%$) and better than 5% for most trace elements, but 10-13% for Cu, Sc, Nb, Er, Th, and U, and between 10% and 15% for Ta, Tm, and Gd (2σ). Analytical details are given in [Song et al. \(2010b\)](#).

3.4 Sr-Nd-Hf isotopes

The whole-rock Sr-Nd-Hf isotopic compositions of five samples were determined at CUGW following the chemical separation and analysis procedures of [Gao et al. \(2004\)](#) and [Yang et al. \(2010\)](#). The Sr, Nd isotopic analyses were done on a Thermo Finnigan Triton Ti Thermal Ionization Mass Spectrometer (TIMS). The Hf isotopic analysis was done using a Thermo Neptune Plus Multi-Collector Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer (MC-

ICP-MS). The other five samples for Sr-Nd-Hf isotopes were analyzed using MC-ICP-MS in the Institute of Oceanology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IOCAS), Qingdao. The chemical separation procedures are given in (Sun et al., 2017 in preparation). Analysis of NBS987 standard run during the same period gave $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr} = 0.710254 \pm 13$ ($n = 5$, 2σ), and $^{143}\text{Nd}/^{144}\text{Nd} = 0.512109 \pm 6$ ($n = 9$, 2σ) for JNdi-1 standard. The Alfa Hf international standard yielded a mean $^{176}\text{Hf}/^{177}\text{Hf}$ of 0.282194 ± 11 ($n = 13$, 2σ). The values of USGS reference materials AGV-2, GSP-2 and RGM-2 run with our samples are given in [Appendix A](#), which are consistent with the recommended reference values (GeoREM, <http://georem.mpch-mainz.gwdg.de/>).

4. Results

4.1 Zircon U-Pb age

Zircon grains from the JCB pluton are ~100 to 300 μm in size and have length/width ratio of 1:1 to 3:1 ([Figure 3a, b](#)). They have clear oscillatory zoning in the CL images and display varying U (110 to 3319 ppm) and Th (85 to 1240 ppm) with Th/U ratios of 0.16 to 1.12, which are consistent with being of magmatic origin ([Rubatto and Gebauer, 2000; Corfu et al., 2003; Hanchar and Hoskin, 2003](#)). Thirteen zircon grains of JCB12-07 give apparent $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$ ages of 216 ± 3 Ma to 221 ± 3 Ma, with a weighted mean age of 217.5 ± 1.6 Ma (MSWD = 0.104, $n = 13$) ([Figure 3a](#)). However, it is noteworthy that some data points plot to the right side of the concordia, probably due to analytical uncertainty of ^{207}Pb and trace common lead ([Yuan et al., 2003](#)). Twenty-seven zircons from sample JCB12-12 give a weighted mean $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$ age of 215.2 ± 1.2 Ma (MSWD = 0.17, $n = 27$) ([Figure 3b](#)). These ages represent the emplacement age of the JCB pluton, which are in agreement with the time

of the NCC-YB collision (Dong et al., 2012).

4.2 Mineral compositions

Carefully selected plagioclase and amphibole crystals were analyzed for major element composition using electron microprobe, in which Fe^{2+} and Fe^{3+} values of amphibole were recalculated after Lin and Peng (1994).

However, the lack of reversed zoning rules out the magma mixing hypothesis for the petrogenesis of the MMEs and their host granodiorite (Figure 4 and Table 3). Following Leake et al. (1997), amphiboles from the MMEs and their host granodiorite are compositionally the same and can be classified as calcic magnesiohornblende with high $\text{Mg}^{\#}$ (0.46-0.61) [$\text{Mg}^{\#} = \text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Fe}^{2+})$] (Figure 5 and Table 3). All the amphibole crystals of the MMEs and their host granodiorite are compositionally uniform without zoning (Table 3). Moreover, the mafic minerals in the MMEs are richer in Mg and plagioclases are more calcic than those of the host (Table 3), support the mafic cumulate model for the MMEs (see Chen et al., 2016, 2018).

4.3 Major and trace elements

The analytical data for whole-rock major and trace element compositions are given in Table 4. In the total alkalis-silica (TAS) diagram (Figure 6a), the granitoid host samples plot in the granite and granodiorite field and the MME samples plot in the granodiorite and gabbroic diorite field. The samples are compositionally high-K calc-alkaline with high $\text{K}_2\text{O}/\text{Na}_2\text{O}$ (0.79 - 1.62 for the host and 1.52 for the MME; Figure 6b) and weak peraluminous to metaluminous with varying A/CNK (0.95 - 1.15 for the host and 0.62 for the MME; Figure 6c). On SiO_2 -variation diagrams (Figure 7), the granitoids define inverse linear trends for

major elements (e.g., TiO_2 , Al_2O_3 , TFe_2O_3 , MgO , CaO , P_2O_5) and selected trace elements (Sr, Eu and Zr), which are apparently consistent with fractionation of amphibole, biotite and plagioclase, and are more directly controlled by modal mineralogy of the samples. It should also be noted that in the majority of the silica variation diagrams (Figure 7), the JCB MME composition differs significantly from both the host rock and other MMEs compositions for its high mode of mafic minerals.

The JCB granitoid host samples display highly fractionated REE patterns ($(\text{La/Yb})_N = 3.86$ to 48.51 , $[\text{La/Sm}]_N > 1$, $[\text{Sm/Yb}]_N > 1$) and moderate negative Eu anomalies ($\text{Eu/Eu}^* = 0.30$ to 0.85) (i.e., weak HREEs depletion, Figure 8). The MME sample shows $(\text{La/Yb})_N = 12.96$ and $\text{Eu/Eu}^* = 0.80$ (Figure 8). The Nb/Ta ratios (10.64 to 17.94 with an average of 14.79) of the host rocks and MME (14.95) are sub-chondritic (chondrite Nb/Ta ratio: 17.5 , Sun and McDonough, 1989), even lower than that of upper oceanic crust (16.08 , Niu and O'Hara, 2009). In the multi-element diagram, all the samples are enriched in LILEs (e.g., Rb, K, Pb) and relatively depleted in HFSEs (e.g., Nb, Ta, Ti) (Figure 8b). These characteristics resemble those of bulk continental crust (BCC; Rudnick and Gao, 2003).

4.4 Sr-Nd-Hf isotopes

Whole rock Sr-Nd-Hf isotope data for 10 samples (including MME) of the JCB pluton are given in Table 5 and plotted in Figures 9 and 12. The $I_{\text{Sr}}(t)$, $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ (where $t = 220$ Ma) are variable, i.e., $I_{\text{Sr}}(t) = 0.7062$ to 0.7081 , $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t) = -6.91$ to -3.97) and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t) = -5.57$ to -1.71 . The whole-rock Nd isotopic model ages (T_{DM}) are essentially the same (~ 1.2 - 2.3 Ga) as the two stage Hf model ages ($T_{\text{DM2}} \sim 1.0$ - 2.0 Ga). The MME sample also shows similar

Sr-Nd-Hf isotopic compositions ($I_{\text{Sr}}(t) = 0.7066$, $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t) = -2.09$, $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t) = -0.14$) to the host granitoid sample. Sample JCB12-06 of the JCB pluton gives very high $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ of 0.8681 because of the high Rb/Sr ratio ($^{87}\text{Rb}/^{86}\text{Sr} \sim 55.1$) due to significant plagioclase-dominated fractional crystallization (also low in Ba, P and Ti; see [Figure 8b](#)), resulting in high radiogenic ^{87}Sr ingrowth, which makes the calculated $I_{\text{Sr}}(t)$ unreliable ([Jahn et al., 2000](#)).

5. Discussion

5.1 Roles of Fractional Crystallization

As shown in [Figure 9](#), the JCB granitoids display compositional variations. Apart from the effects of magma source heterogeneity and the extent of melting, crystal fractionation can be important factors contributing to the compositional variations. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the potential effect of the fractional crystallization before discussing source characteristics of the JCB granitoids.

As pointed out above, the JCB granitoids slightly decrease in TiO_2 , Al_2O_3 , TFe_2O_3 , MgO , CaO , P_2O_5 , Sr and Eu with increasing SiO_2 ([Figure 7](#)), likely suggestive of fractional crystallization of ferromagnesian minerals (biotite \pm hornblende), plagioclase, Fe-Ti oxides, and apatite ([Rollison, 1993](#)). The granitoids exhibit decreasing Zr with increasing SiO_2 ([Figure 7](#)), indicating that zircon was saturated and on the liquidus ([Li et al., 2007](#); [Zhong et al., 2009](#)). Negative Eu anomalies and depleted Ti, P show that fractional crystallization of plagioclase, Fe-Ti oxides, and apatite is important in the petrogenesis ([Figure 8](#)). Positive correlations of CaO with Sr and Eu/Eu* ([Figure 10a, b](#)) are consistent with modal plagioclase control in the samples (resulting from either plagioclase accumulation or crystallization

removal). Figure 11 shows that fractionation of K-feldspar, plagioclase and biotite played an important role in the petrogenesis of the JCB granitoids. The granitoids show sub-chondritic Nb/Ta ratio (10.64 to 17.94 with an average of 14.79) and depleted in Nb, Ta in spider diagram resulting from the higher partition coefficient of Nb than Ta during hornblende crystallization ($K_{\text{hornblende Nb/Ta}} = 1.40$) (Foley et al., 2002). Therefore, fractional crystallization is important in the petrogenesis of these granitoids.

5.2 Petrogenesis of the JCB pluton

Generally, granitoids are typically divided into I-, S-, A- and M-type in terms of source rock types and petrogenesis (Chappell et al., 1974; Collins et al., 1982; Whalen, 1985). The samples of the JCB pluton have $(^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr})_i$ of 0.7062 to 0.7081, $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ of -6.91 to -3.94 and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ of -5.57 to -2.66, have no aluminous minerals such as muscovite, tourmaline and garnet, and have mafic mineral assemblage of hornblende and biotite (Figure 2). All these, plus relatively low A/CNK values (≤ 1.1 , Figure 6c), are consistent with most of these granitoids being of I-type granitoid.

The earlier study proposed two models to explain the origin of the JCB granitoids pluton: (1) mixing of mafic and felsic magmas on the basis of Sr and O isotopes (Wen et al., 2008); (2) melting of upper crustal argillaceous rocks (Peng, 2013) by interpreting the trace element data, but we consider that these interpretations are problematic (see below).

The JCB pluton contains MMEs. The origin of the MMEs is a key to the petrogenesis of the granitoids and has been the subject of debate (Barbarin, 2005; Chappell et al., 2000; Yang et al., 2007; Niu et al., 2013; Huang et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2015, 2016, 2018). Here,

293 we discuss the MMEs of the five syn-collision granitoid plutons (JCB, Luchuba, Wuchaba,
 294 Lvjing and Baijiazhuang) (See [Figure 1](#)) ([Duan et al., 2016](#); [Kong et al., 2017](#)). Several lines
 295 of evidence favoring the mafic cumulate model are addressed below: (1) the petrography
 296 shows typical magmatic textures ([Figure 2d](#)), ruling out the MMEs being of restite; (2) The
 297 MMEs don not show core-to-rim mineral compositional and textural variations, excluding
 298 MEEs being of matasonatic origin ([Figure 2d](#)) (Eberz et al., 1990). (3) the MMEs have the
 299 same mineralogy as the host granitoids, but have higher modal amphibole (and biotite). Note
 300 that the MMEs have high Cr and Ni contents, consistent with high partition coefficients of
 301 Cr and Ni for amphibole and biotite ([Ewart et al., 1994](#)); (4) the MMEs have the same age as
 302 their host ([Jiang, 2016](#)); (5) their different major and trace element abundances from their
 303 hosts are largely controlled by mineral modal proportions ([Figures 7 and 8](#)); (6) MMEs have
 304 slightly higher $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$, $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ than their host granitoids and similar $(^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr})_i$ ([Figure 9](#)).
 305 Obviously, the data are more consistent with the same mantle source with varying extents of
 306 crustal contamination ([Figure 9a, b, c](#)). The MMEs are less contaminated because they are
 307 earlier cumulate whereas the remaining magma continues to evolve and assimilate with the
 308 crustal country lithologies before solidified as the granitoid hosts. This is a straightforward
 309 geological process ([Niu et al., 2013](#); [Chen et al., 2015](#)). It is worthy to note that the bulk
 310 composition of the JCB-MME sample is gabbroic diorite (lack of pyroxene) which is
 311 different from the granodioritic compositions of other MMEs because of it contains more
 312 hornblende. Importantly, the MMEs comprise dominantly amphibole and plagioclase ([Figure](#)
 313 [2d](#)), which are common cumulate minerals in andesitic melts. If the parental melts were
 314 basaltic, the typical cumulate from such evolved basaltic melt would be gabbro dominated

by clinopyroxene and plagioclase. This is an important petrological concept. It is worth to note that the same or very similar observations mentioned above have been commonly used as evidence for magma mixing for MME-bearing granitoids. Many researchers (e.g. [Pin et al., 1990](#); [Holden et al., 1991](#); [Poli and Tommasini, 1991](#); [Elburg, 1996](#)) have claimed partial or complete isotopic equilibration of the MMEs with their host. Experiments show that the isotopic equilibration advances faster than the chemical equilibration and Sr isotopic equilibrium is faster than that of Nd (e.g. [Holden et al., 1987](#); [Pin et al., 1990](#)). Compared to the Nd, the Sr isotopic compositions of the host and enclaves are more likely to be equilibrated through diffusion exchange, but it is physically unlikely with isotopes being homogenized whereas major and trace elements are not. Therefore, we maintain that the MMEs are early cumulate as the host granitoids.

In the eastern segment of the south Qinling tectonic unit, there are widespread Precambrian basement exposures, e.g., the Yudongzi Group, the Foping Group, the Douling Group, the Wudang Group, the Yaolinghe Group and the Yunxi Group. Their formation time is from the Neoarchean, Paleoproterozoic to Neoproterozoic based on geochronology ([Zhang et al., 2002](#)). According to Nd isotopic compositional comparison between the WQOB granitoids and the Precambrian basements of the South Qinling, none of the basements can be taken as the magma source for the WQOB granitoids ([Zhang et al., 2007](#)). The JCB pluton has lower and constant ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$)_i, higher $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(\text{t})$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(\text{t})$ than the mature continental crust ($[\text{}^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}]_i < 0.72$, $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(\text{t}) > -12$) (the reference data are from [Niu and O'Hara, 2009](#)). Obviously, it is unlikely that these granitoids were produced by melting mature continental crust, but has significant mantle contribution (or juvenile continental crust) in terms of

isotopes. In addition, the slightly radiogenic Hf-Nd isotopes are coupled and lie in the global mantle and crustal array (Figure 9d), and removed far away from (higher than) mature continental crust, which is again consistent with mantle input, reflecting the process of juvenile continental crust formation manifested by the petrogenesis of these granitoids. Some studies suggest that amphibolite dehydration of lower crust can produce such magmas (Zhang et al., 2007), yet amphibolite melting preferentially produces high-Na₂O, not high-K₂O magmas, which are different from the JCB granitoids (Figure 6b; Beard and Lofgren, 1991). Moreover, the chondrite normalized REE patterns (Figure 8a) contradicts with the geochemical signatures formed by partial melting of lower crustal garnet amphibolite or eclogite. Thus, the origin by only partial melting of the pre-existing lower crust is unlikely.

To produce such andesitic to felsic BCC-like magmas with inherited mantle-like isotopic composition, it requires a basaltic source plus continental materials. The “island arc” model can produce the “continental signature” (e.g., enriched in LREEs and LILEs, depleted in HFSEs) and mantle-like isotopes. However, the bulk arc crust is too mafic to produce the more felsic melts (Niu et al., 2013). Although Lee and Anderson (2015) offered a solution to this difficulty, partial melting of arc crust will produce high Sr magmas, yet the Sr of the JCB plutons is not as high as island arc basalts (IAB), but only slightly higher than MORB (Niu and O’Hara, 2009). The plagioclase separation can lead to low Sr but it cannot reduce the high Sr/Sr* values in IAB (See Fig. 4 in Niu et al., 2013). Thus, this model is inadequate to explain the JCB pluton in the WQOB. Although the exact timing of the YB with the NCC collision is also controversial, when the paleogeographic evolution is taken into account, the sedimentary facies change from turbiditic deposits during the Early-Middle Triassic to

shallow marine-terrestrial deposits during the Middle-Late Triassic in WQOB (Yan et al., 2012). Furthermore, the lack of Late Triassic sedimentary rocks in the South Qinling belt suggests that the Mianlue oceanic basin has been closed during the Late Triassic (Yang et al., 2012). Therefore, the Late Triassic (~ 210-220Ma) magmatism witnessed a period of continental collision. In addition, Mo et al. (2008) already demonstrate that syn-collisional magmatism is capable to produce volumetrically significant I-type granitoid plutons. Therefore, we suggest the JCB pluton formed in a syncollisional setting. The popular explanation is that a thermal pulse associated with slab breakoff resulted in the asthenosphere upwelling along the Mianlue suture during the Late Triassic, and the upwelling asthenosphere triggered partial melting of the Neoproterozoic sub-continental lithosphere mantle (SCLM) that generated the mafic magma and the partial melting of the Neoproterozoic lower crust that generated the granitic magmatism (Qin et al., 2009; Zhu et al., 2013; Yang et al., 2015). As noted above, only lower crust melting is unlikely to produce the observed granitoids, and the MMEs as the magmatic cumulate of hornblende-plagioclase assemblage cannot represent mafic magma of SCLM origin, because the asthenosphere mantle cannot upwell and melt upper crust to generate granitic magmas (Wen et al., 2008) without complete lithosphere removal (delamination). Importantly, the popular slab-breakoff model in explaining syncollisional magmatism is physically unlikely (Niu, 2017). Therefore, mixing of mafic and felsic magmas is unlikely to generate the JCB pluton in dynamics.

In this case, a reasonable mechanism in a syncollisional setting proposed by Niu et al. (2013) possibly effective in explaining the petrogenesis of these granitoids. Partial melting of subducted basaltic ocean crust under the amphibolite facies conditions can produce

381 andesitic melts with inherited mantle isotopic signatures (Niu et al., 2013). Partial melting of
 382 oceanic crust cannot generate high K/Na melts, and crust contribution is necessary. Isotopes
 383 also require possible contributions of continental crustal materials (see above). The host
 384 granitoids and the MME have indistinguishable Sr isotopic compositions and $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$
 385 correlated with SiO_2 (Figure 9a, b, c), manifesting significant crustal contamination of these
 386 granitoids. The $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ and SiO_2 of MMEs of JCB, Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and
 387 Baijiazhuang are weakly positively correlated, suggesting the contamination of cumulate
 388 samples (MMEs) after their separation from the main body of largely liquid magma (parent
 389 magmas) (Reiners et al., 1996), which accords with the cumulate origin of the MMEs (see
 390 above). Crustal assimilation with concurrent fractional crystallization (AFC) is now widely
 391 considered as an important process of magma evolution (DePaolo et al., 1981). AFC or
 392 fractional crystallization (FC) of basaltic magma can produce granitoids (Bowen, 1928).
 393 These suggest that the AFC from parental magmas of basaltic or more likely mafic andesitic
 394 compositions may be a suitable mechanism for the JCB granitoids. Hence, partial melting of
 395 subducted basaltic ocean crust under the amphibolite facies in combination with magma
 396 evolution through AFC processes can explain the petrogenesis of the JCB pluton. But simple
 397 isotopic calculations show only ~40- 45% ocean crust (MORB) contribution (the maximum
 398 contribution) to the source of these granitoids (Figure 12). In the calculation, the Mianlue
 399 oceanic crust slab is represented by the 350 Ma ophiolitic MORB in Qinling, central China
 400 (Xu et al., 2002), and upper crust is represented by the average composition of ~2000Ma
 401 Douling gneiss in South Qinling (Shen et al., 1997). 55-60% mature continental crust
 402 contribution likely means the melting occurred at crust depth. MORB melting model cannot

403 reasonably explain the petrogenesis of JCB granitoids. The whole-rock Nd isotopic model
404 ages (T_{DM} ; 1.2-2.3 Ga) and two stage Hf model ages (T_{DM} ; 1.0-2.0 Ga) of JCB granitoids
405 support a source composed of ancient lower continental crust (Qin et al., 2009). Therefore,
406 we propose a more reasonable model that is consistent with the observations and basic
407 petrological concepts. When the Mianlue oceanic slab subducted beneath the Qinling Block,
408 dehydration of the ocean crust can effectively lower the solidus of mantle wedge peridotite
409 to melt for the basaltic melt (e.g., Pearce and Peate, 1995). Extraction, ascent and
410 underplating of such mantle wedge-derived basaltic melts can induce the lower continental
411 crustal melting to produce magmas parental to the JCB granitoids (Figure 13). All these
412 processes are likely taking place in an open system with continued evolution/replenishment
413 accompanied by crustal contamination and assimilation. Such mantle derived melt, also
414 contributes materials to the granitoid magmatism, i.e., there exists mixing between the
415 mantle-derived isotopically depleted melt and isotopically enriched felsic melt from the
416 lower continental crust, which is consistent with variable isotope compositions (Figure 9).
417 Here, we emphasize that components from depleted mantle wedge and upper crust materials
418 must have been involved in the formation process of the granitic magmas. When a primitive
419 magma body is emplaced into a cold environment with the wall rock having temperatures
420 below the liquidus of the magma, magma quench and rapid crystallization are inevitable
421 because of the thermal contrast, despite the high viscosity of granitoids. The first major
422 liquidus phases of parental magma of the grantoids would be amphibole, biotite, plagioclase,
423 and rapid quench will facilitate abundant nucleation without between-nuclei space for growth,
424 thus forming fine-grained MME cumulate, which can be readily disturbed by replenishing

magmas, leading to the dispersed MMEs (Chen et al., 2015, 2016, 2018) in the granitoid hosts. If the parental magmas represent early batches of melt intruding the crustal magma chamber, it would have been assimilated more of the crust materials with evolved Sr isotopic compositions inherited in the cumulated MMEs.

5.3 The origin of granitoids in West Qinling

The JCB, Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and Baijiazhuang, all the five plutons are clustered together (Figure 1) commonly called “the Zhongchuan pluton group” in the WQOB (Peng, 2013). The genetic relationship of the five plutons remains poorly known (Li et al., 1993; Xu et al., 2006; Peng, 2013). The JCB pluton and the other four syncollisional plutons (Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and Baijiazhuang) (Duan et al., 2016; Kong et al., 2017) (Figure 1) have MMEs and show similar mineralogy (Qz + Pl + Kfs + Bt ± Hb ± Zircon ± Apatite ± Fe-Ti oxides) with varying modes. They are metaluminous to weakly peraluminous I-type or S-type granitoids and largely belong to high-K calc-alkaline series (Figure 6). These granitoids have similar REE patterns with LREEs enrichment, significant Eu anomalies and trace element patterns resembling those of BCC (Figure 8) and show the similar Sr-Nd-Hf isotope characters with inherited mantle-like isotopic signatures from the mantle wedge (Figure 9), the large Nd-Hf isotope ranges due to the magmas underwent various degrees crustal contamination. Importantly, they have the same intrusive ages (Table 1), all these indicating they are products of the same thermal and tectonic event.

5.4 Significance of continental crust growth in the WQOB

In our study, trace element patterns of the JCB, Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and

Baijiazhuang plutons resemble those of BCC. Despite the more felsic and radiogenic Sr compositions of the five granitoid plutons, it has relatively higher $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ than that of mature continental crust ($[\text{}^{87}\text{Sr}/\text{}^{86}\text{Sr}]_i < 0.72$, $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t) > -12$) (Niu and O'Hara, 2009). In particular, the value of $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ of these granitoids obviously higher than the value of continental crust (see Figure 9d and Figure 12), pointing to the contributions of mantle or juvenile crust materials (see Section 5.2). Hence, this syn-collisional pluton represents juvenile crust with primary materials coming from the mantle wedge rather than oceanic crust slab.

5.5 Tectonic Significance

Our new data also give insights into the evolution of the Qinling Orogen. The detailed geochronological data for the high-pressure/ultrahigh-pressure (HP/UHP) metamorphic rocks manifested that the subduction and continental collision between the NCC and YB took place no later than ca. 230 Ma in the Dabie-Sulu orogen (Liu et al., 2004; Zheng et al., 2008). In comparison, our studied granitoids in the Qinling region represent the initial stage of the NCC-YB continental collision after ~ 220 Ma, which were later than the continental collision age in the Dabie-Sulu Orogen (~ 230 Ma). Our results show that subduction of the Mianlue oceanic crust beneath the WQOB was still going on before ~ 220 Ma and the final closure of the Mianlue oceanic basin occurred at ~ 220 Ma. Considering the Paleo-Tethyan Mianlue oceanic basin between the NCC and the YB in the Dabie-Sulu Orogen closed ~ 10 Myrs earlier than that in the Qinling Orogen.

6. Conclusions

(1) Zircon U-Pb dating yields ages of 217.5 ± 1.6 Ma and 215.2 ± 1.2 Ma for the JCB pluton, essentially the same as the ages of other four plutons in the area. We interpret this magmatism as response to the collision of the Yangtze Block with the North China Craton.

(2) The granitoids of the JCB, Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and Baijiazhuang plutons display an enriched LILEs and LREE pattern and have variably strong negative Eu anomalies, which is similar to those of bulk continental crust but more evolved. The enriched Sr-Nd-Hf isotope compositions suggest that their main source is the ancient lower continental crust. However, components from depleted mantle wedge and upper crust materials must have been involved in the petrogenesis of the granitic magmas.

(3) We suggest that oceanic crust slab dehydration induced mantle wedge melting remains the primary mechanism for mantle derived basaltic melts, whose underplating and intrusion of the crust can cause continental crustal melting.

(4) Jiaochangba, Luchuba, Wuchaba, Lvjing and Baijiazhuang plutons are products of the same thermal and tectonic event.

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Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Figure captions

Figure 1. (a), (b) Simplified geological map of the Western Qinling Orogenic belt (modified from Zhang et al., 2007). (c) Modified from 1:250,000 geological map of Minxian and Tianshui sheets (Xiao, 2004). The abbreviations are as follows: JCB = Jiaochangba, LCB = Luchaba, WCB = Wuchaba, LJ = Lvjing, BJZ = Baijiazhuang.

Figure 2. (a), (b) An outcrop of JCB granitoid pluton with mafic magmatic enclaves (MMEs). (c) Photomicrographs of the JCB granitoid host (cross-polarized light or XPL) (d) Photomicrographs of the JCB MME (XPL). Showing the same mineralogy between the host granodiorite and their MMEs and the MMEs have greater mafic mineral modes. The abbreviations are as follows: Pl - Plagioclase, Qz - Quartz, Bt - Biotite, Hb - Hornblende.

Figure 3. Zircon U-Pb concordia plots and weighted mean $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$ ages for (a) JCB12-07 and (b) JCB12-12 of the JCB pluton.

Figure 4. Plagioclase composition in granitoid hosts (JCB12-10) and the MME (JCB12-11).

See Table 3a for compositional data.

Figure 5. Chemical compositions of amphiboles from granitoid hosts (JCB12-10) and the MME (JCB12-11) in the amphibole classification diagram ([Leake et al., 1997](#)). See Table 3a for compositional data.

Figure 6. (a) Total alkalis ($\text{Na}_2\text{O} + \text{K}_2\text{O}$) versus SiO_2 (TAS) diagram showing the compositional variation of the JCB samples. The MME is less felsic than the granitic hosts. **(b)** Diagram of K_2O vs. SiO_2 for granitoids of JCB pluton. **(c)** Diagram of A/NK [$\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3/(\text{Na}_2\text{O} + \text{K}_2\text{O})$] vs. A/CNK [molar ratio $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3/(\text{CaO} + \text{Na}_2\text{O} + \text{K}_2\text{O})$] for granitoids of JCB pluton.

Figure 7. SiO_2 variation diagrams of representative major element oxides (wt.%) and selected trace elements (ppm) of the JCB samples.

Figure 8. (a) Chondrite normalized REE patterns, and **(b)** N-MORB normalized incompatible element abundances of samples from the JCB pluton; For comparison, the average Bulk continental crust (BCC, red solid line) ([Rudnick and Gao, 2003](#)) is also plotted. Chondrite and N-MORB values are from [Sun and McDonough \(1989\)](#). The data of shades of grey are from [Duan et al. \(2016\)](#); [Kong et al. \(2017\)](#).

Figure 9. (a)-(c) Plots of Sr, Nd and Hf isotopes (in the forms of initial $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ or I_{Sr} , $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ and $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$) against SiO_2 , showing isotopes between MMEs with lower SiO_2 and the host granitoids with higher SiO_2 . The data of LJ, BJZ from [Duan et al. \(2016\)](#) and the data of WCB, LCB from [Kong et al. \(2017\)](#). **(d)** The $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ of upper crust (mature crust) is from

Reiners et al. (1995) and the $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ is inferred from Nd isotope following the equation ($\epsilon_{\text{Hf}} = 1.59\epsilon_{\text{Nd}} + 1.28$) given by (Chauvel et al., 2008). The field for crust-mantle array is from Vervoort et al. (1999) and the terrestrial array is from Vervoort et al. (2011).

Figure10. (a) CaO versus Eu/Eu* diagram; (b) CaO versus Sr diagram. The graphic symbol as Figure 5.

Figure11. (a) Sr versus Ba diagram; (b) Sr versus Rb diagram.

Figure 12. Plot of $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ vs. $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$ for JCB granitoids. The modeled AFC path uses parental magma (Mianlue MORB) with 93 ppm Sr (I_{Sr} : 0.705), 6.5 ppm Nd ($\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$: 8.71) (Xu et al., 2002) and a hypothetical basement rock Douling gneiss from south Qinling with 268 ppm Sr (I_{Sr} : 0.721) and 26 ppm Nd ($\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$: -14.5) (Shen et al., 1997) for conceptual simplicity. AFC path calculated according to (DePaolo et al., 1981) equation. The ratio of assimilation to fractionation was set at $r = 0.15$. Bulk K_d 's for Sr and Nd were 0.36 and 0.86, respectively.

Figure 13. Schematic illustration for the generation of the JCB granitoids in West Qinling during the late Triassic (~220Ma). See text for explanation.

Table captions

Table 1. Summary of lithologies, geochemistry, and geochronology of the five granitoid plutons in the West Qinling.

Table 2. Zircon U-Pb data for the Jiaochangba pluton.

854 **Table 3.** a. Microprobe analysis of plagioclase in the host granitoids and the mafic magmatic
855 enclaves; b. Microprobe analysis of amphibole in the host granitoids and the mafic magmatic
856 enclaves.

857 **Table 4.** Major (wt.%) and trace element concentrations (ppm) of the Jiaochangba pluton.

858 **Table 5.** Sr, Nd, Hf isotopes of the Jiaochangba pluton.

859 **Appendix A.** The Sr-Nd-Hf isotopes replicate analyses results of the international reference
860 materials.

Fig.1

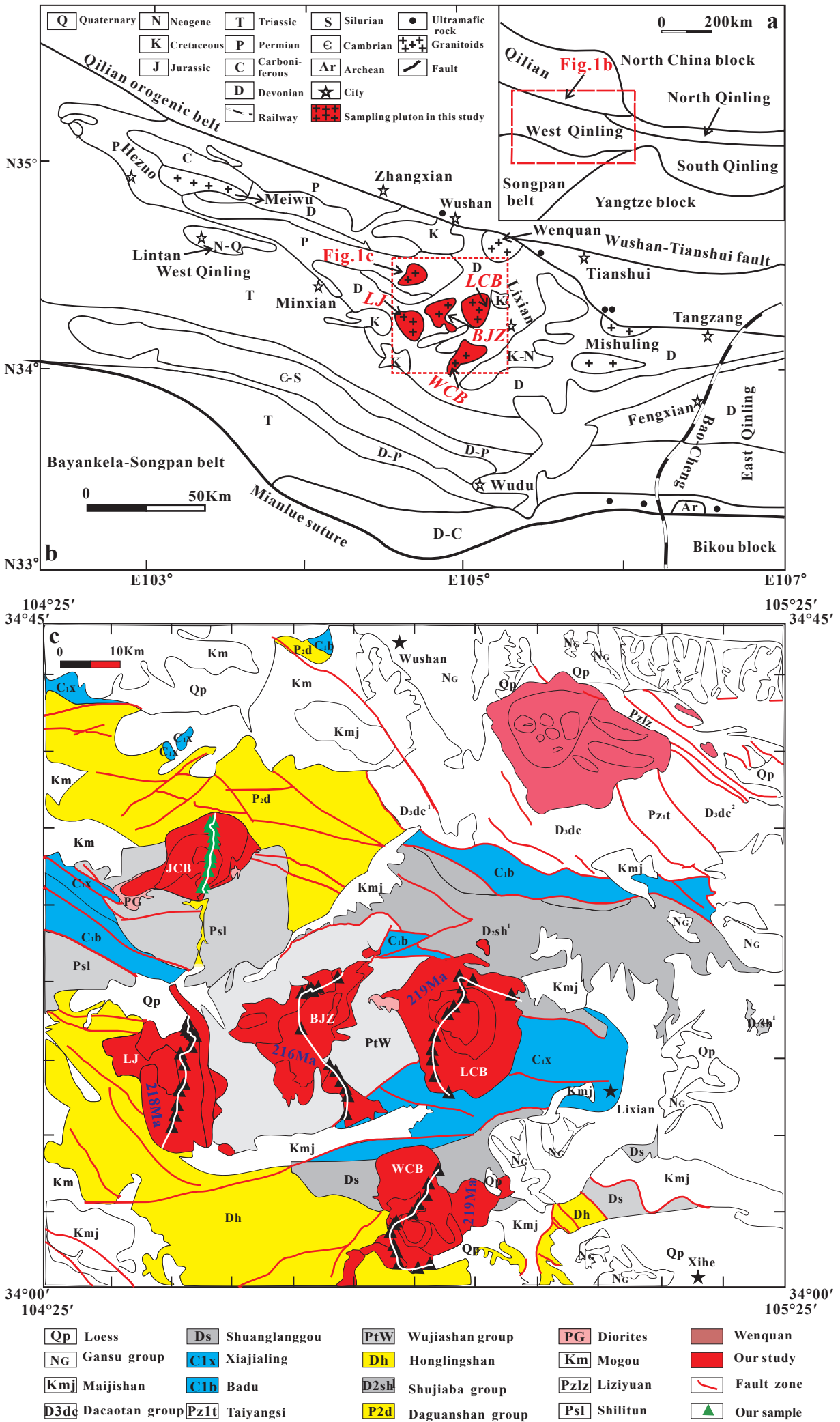


Fig.2

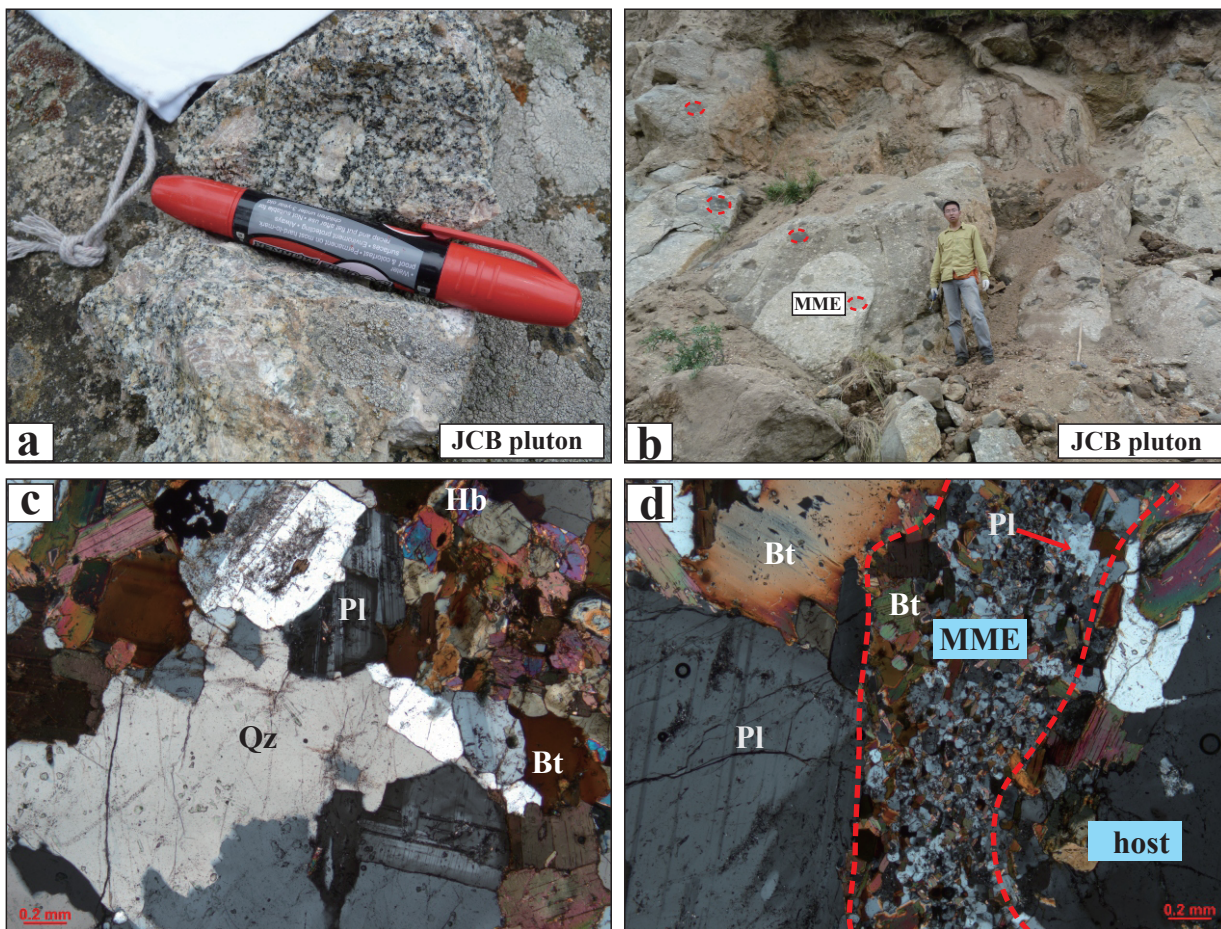


Fig.3

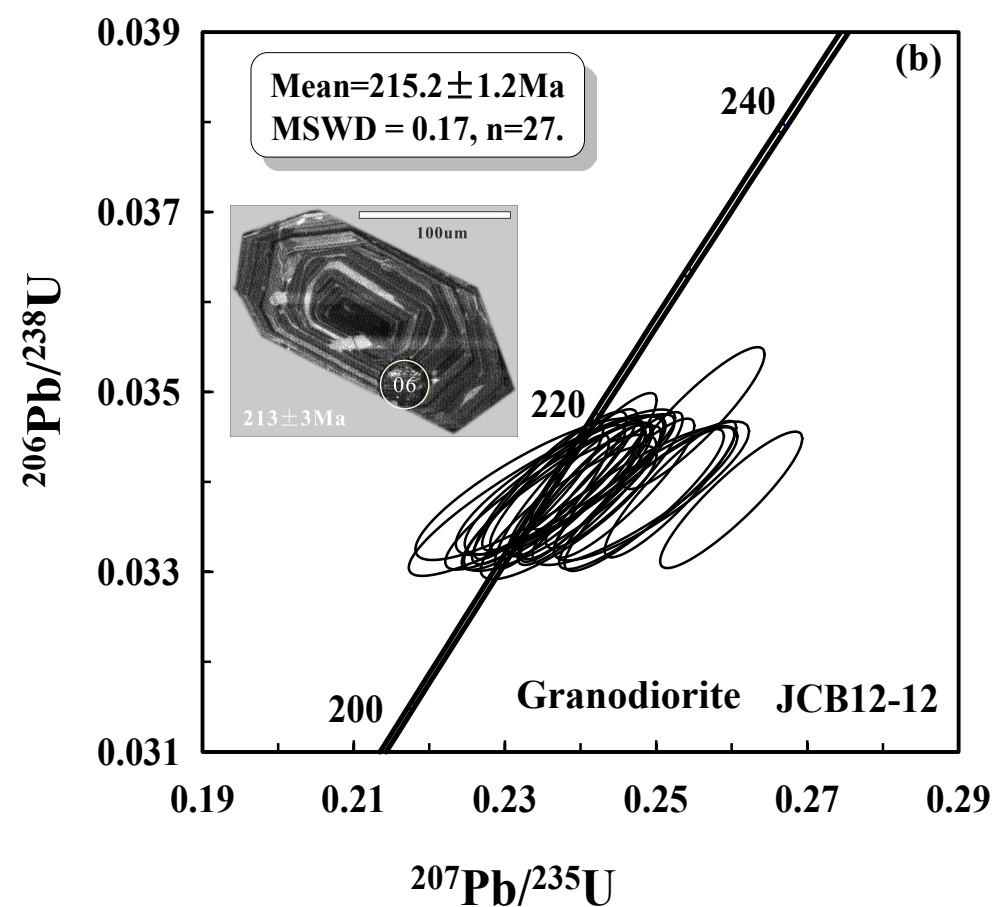
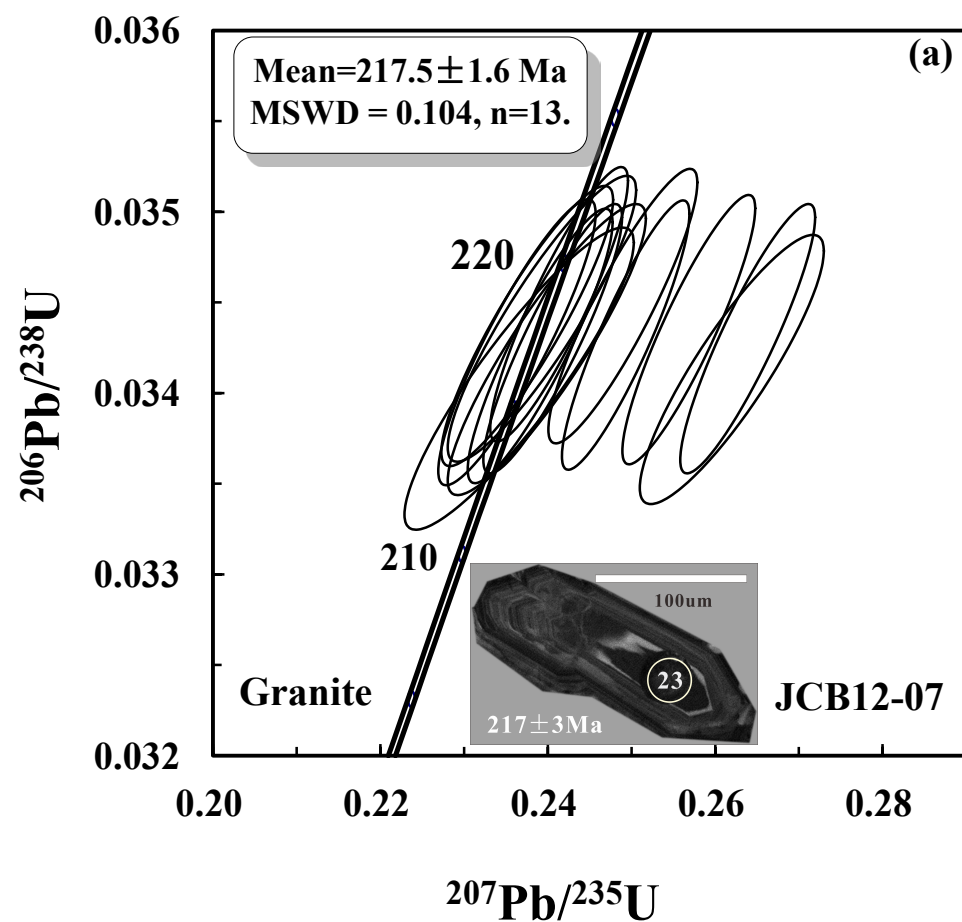


Fig.4

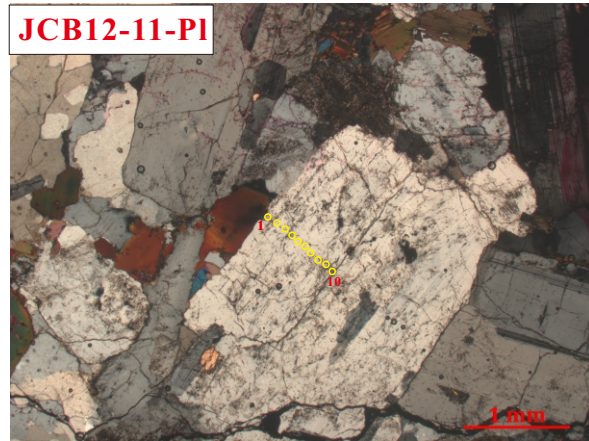
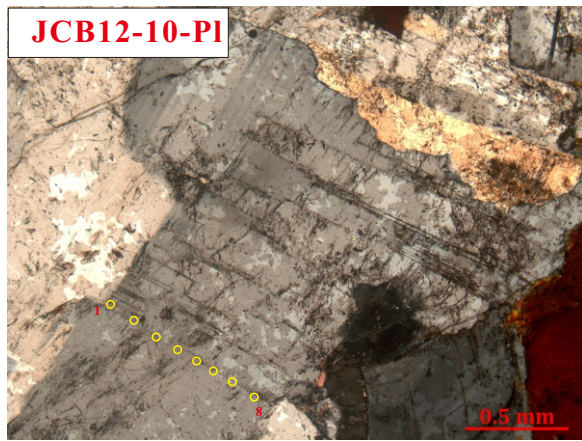


Fig.5

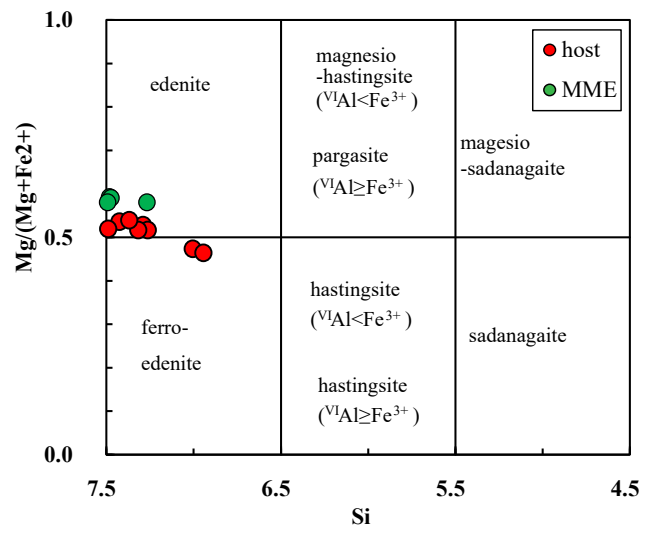


Fig.6

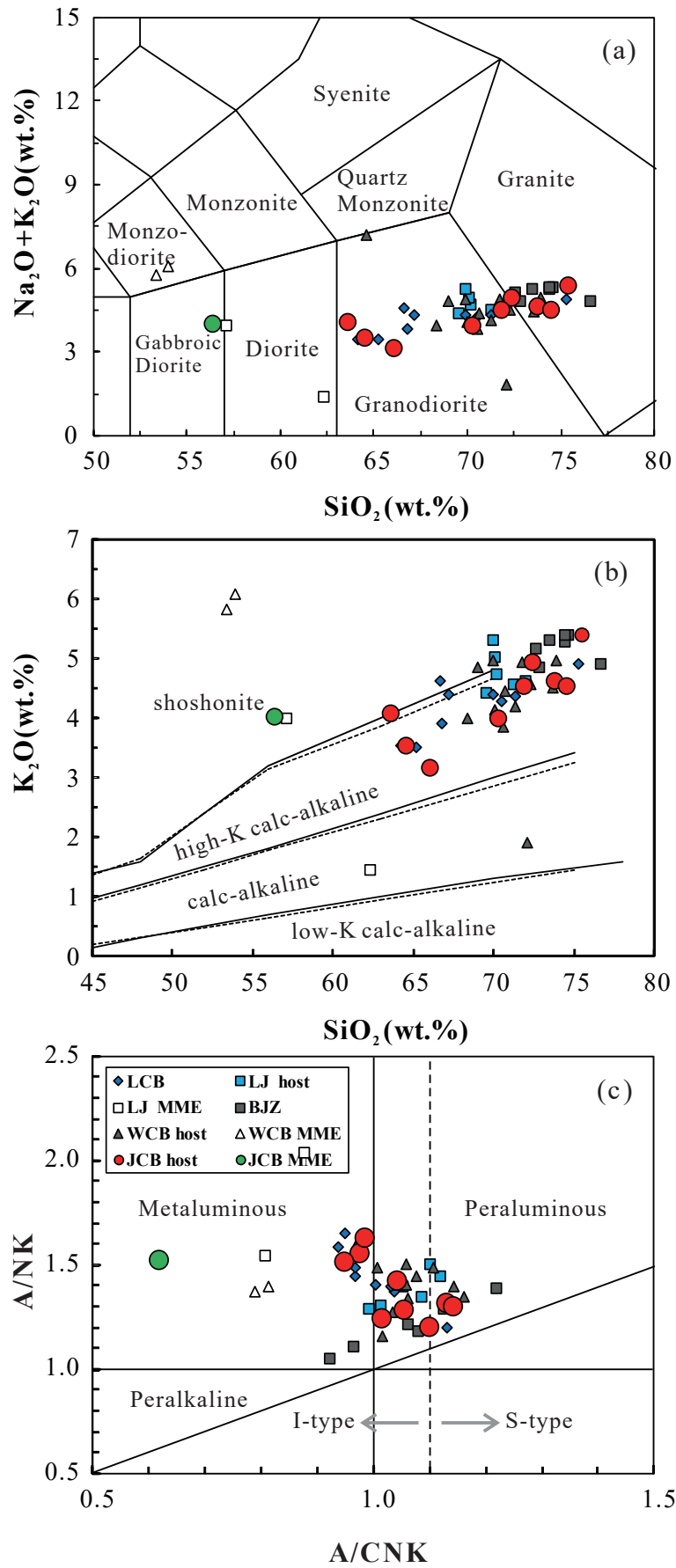


Fig.7

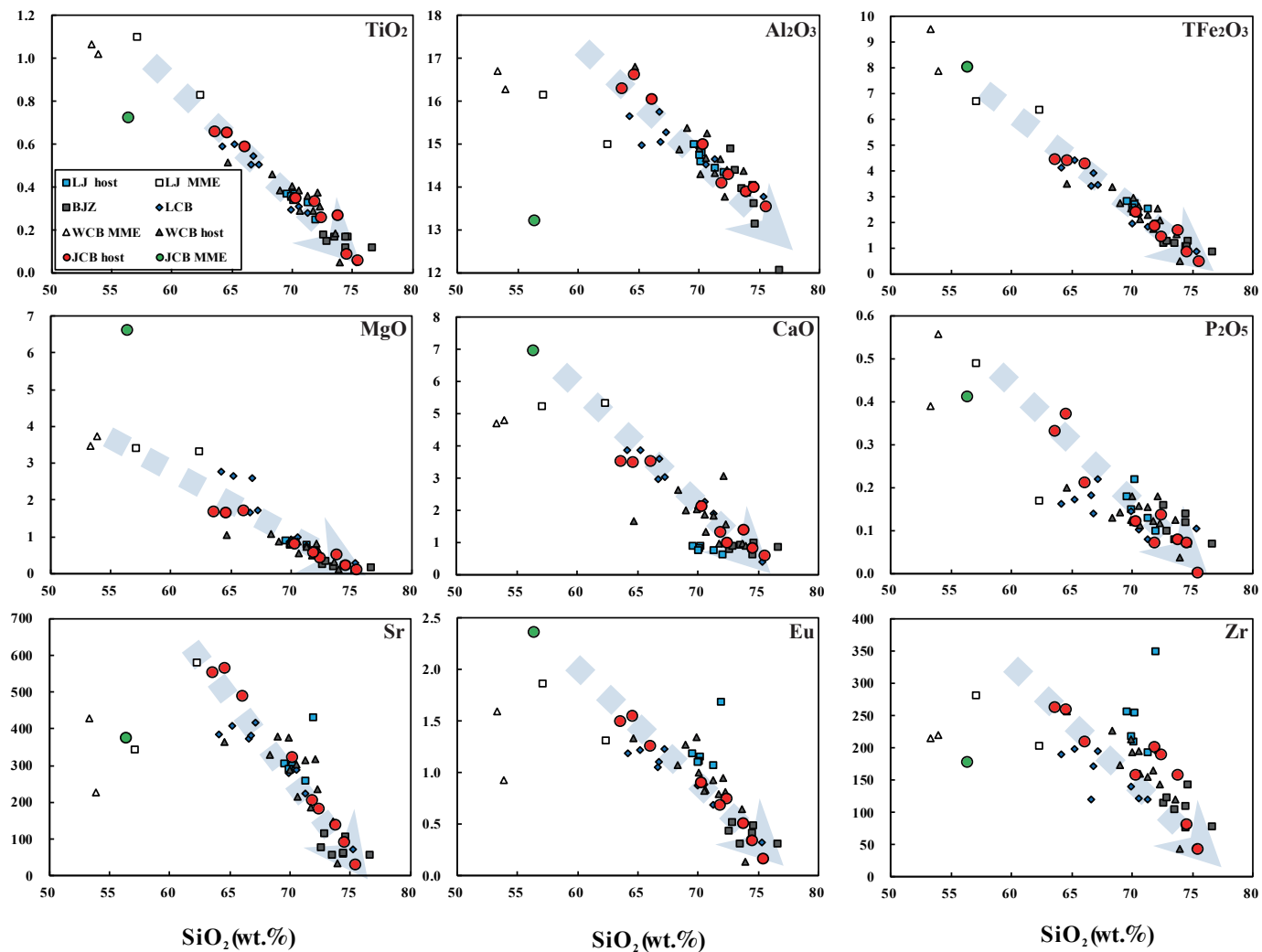


Fig.8

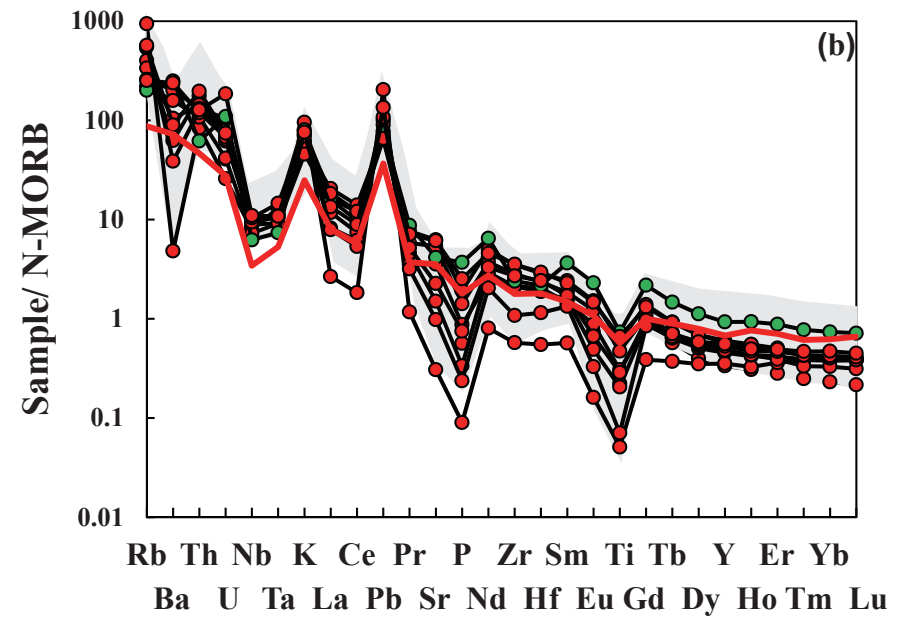
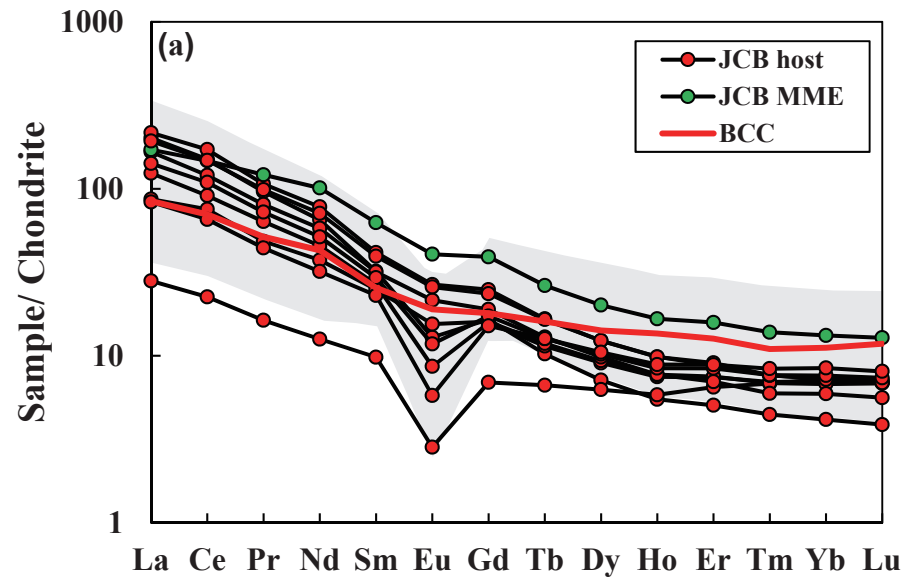


Fig.9

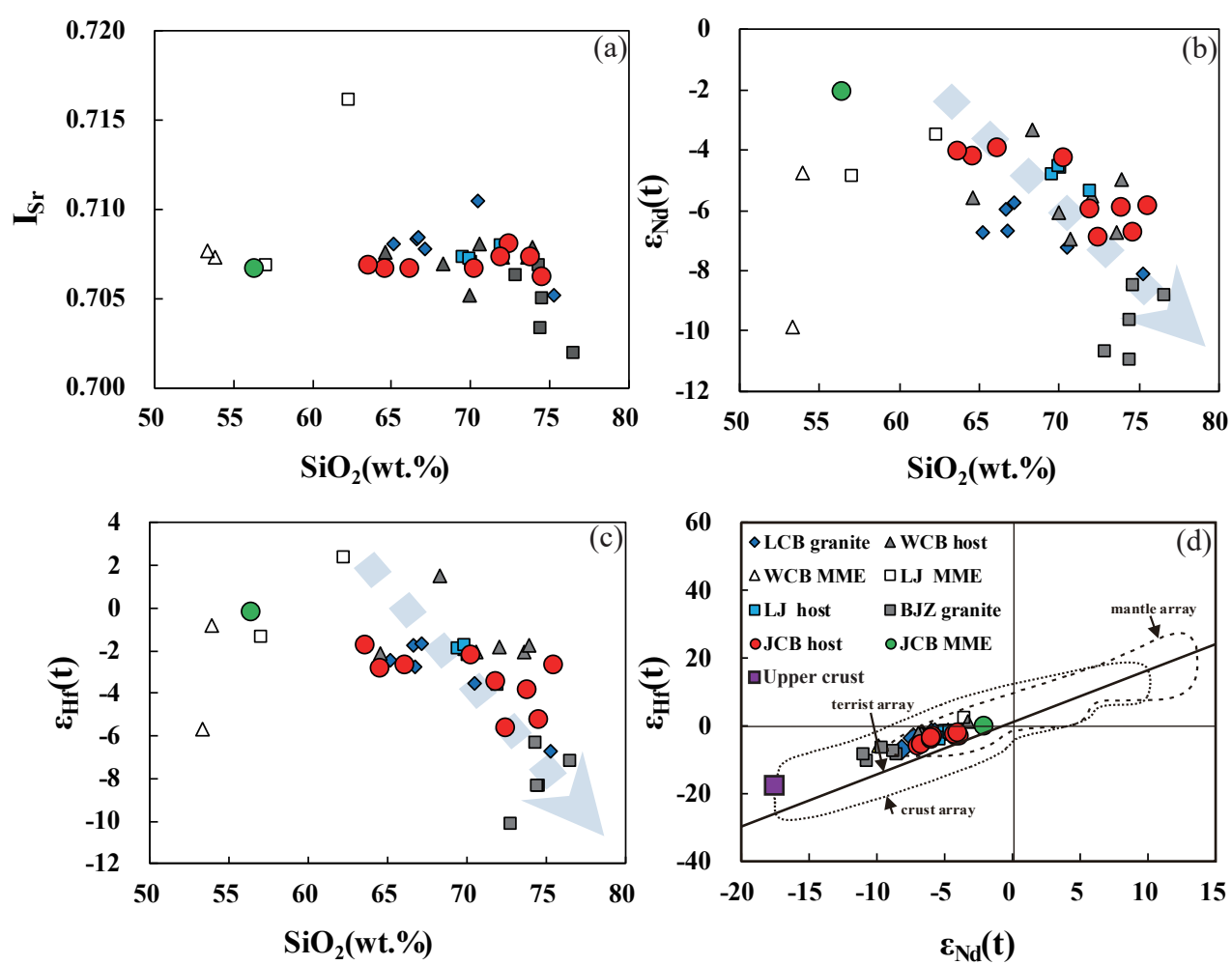


Fig.10

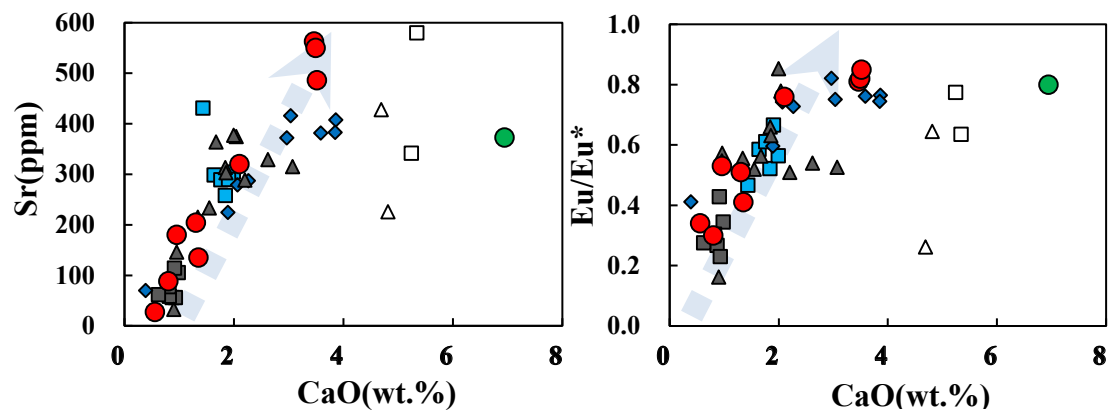


Fig.11

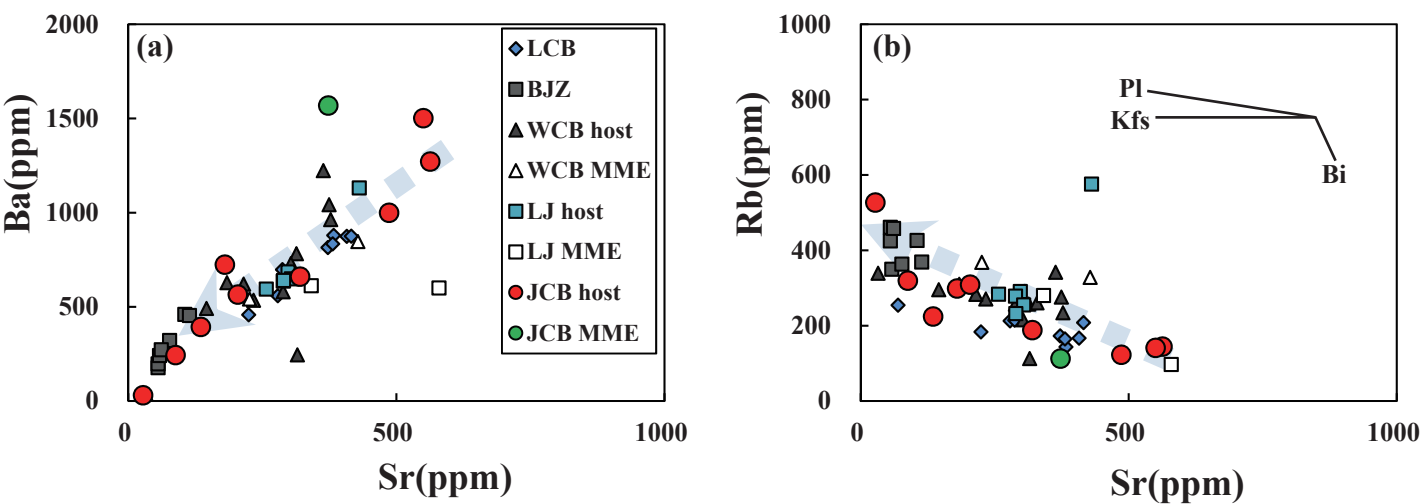


Fig.12

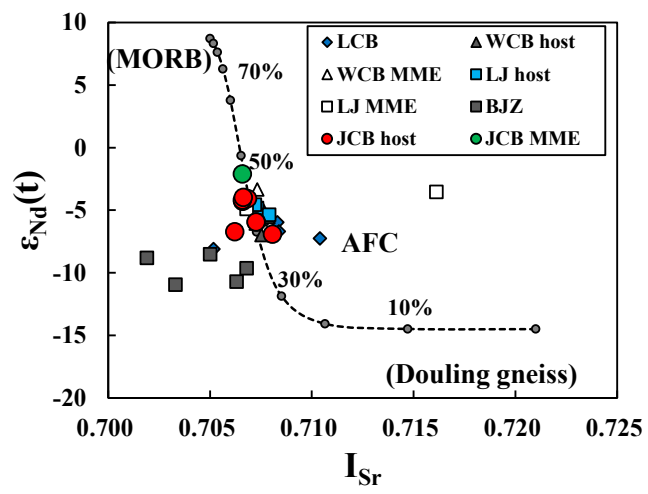


Fig.13

Late Triassic (~220Ma)

